

Washington State Patrol Media Release

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“Motorcycle Helmet”

Wearing a helmet meeting standards set by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) when operating or riding on a motorcycle is still required.

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 46.37.530 was updated (effective date July 27, 2003) by the 2003 Legislative session to include “(3) For purposes of this section, “motorcycle helmet” means a protective covering for the head consisting of a hard outer shell, padding adjacent to and inside the outer shell, and a neck or chin strap type retention system, with a sticker indicating that the motorcycle helmet meets standards established by the United States Department of Transportation.”

Standards set by the USDOT for motorcycle helmets are outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 49 Section 571.218. This standard establishes the minimum performance requirements for helmets designed for use by motorcyclists and other motor vehicle users. A link to this standard may be found by accessing the State Patrol’s Web page at www.wsp.wa.gov ; once there, under “Select a Topic,” scroll until you find “motorcycle helmet.” When you are on the page for motorcycle helmets, page down until you see the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards 218—this will bring up the USDOT standards for motorcycle helmets.

Unfortunately there are numerous instances when operators and passengers on motorcycles involved in a collision were seriously injured or died as a result of not wearing a helmet meeting the standards set by USDOT.

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